

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY AF/W-JSEGARS/EB/ORF/FSE-WBWHITMAN:DFD

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 195972

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:/A, GDS

TAGS:ENGR, LI, US

SUBJECT: SUNOCO INTENTIONS RE LIUERIAN REFINERY

REF: STATE 74266

1. SUNOCO OFFICIAL W.H. SUMERFORD CALLED ON DEPARTMENT SEPT. 3 AND AGAIN DECLARED SUNOCO AND HYDROCARBON RESEARCH CORP'S (HRC) DESIRE TO GET RID OF THEIR INTEREST IN LIUERIAN REFINERY. SUMERFORD STATED SUNOCO NOW PLANNING TO VISIT SOME MAJOR PRODUCERS -- NIGERIA, IRAN, AND SAUDI ARABIA HEAD LIST -- TO SEE IF THEY INTERESTED IN BUYING INTO REFINERY, AND WANTED TO KNOW IF DEPARTMENT AWARE ANY NATIONAL OIL COMPANIES OR PETROLEUM MARKETERS WITH GUARANTEED SUPPLY OF CRUDE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN SECURING PARTNERSHIP IN REFINERY WITH IDEA OF GRADUALLY ASSUMING CONTROL OF SUNOCO AND RC INTEREST WHICH NOW TOTALS 85 PERCENT. DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS REPLIED THEY HAD LITTLE INFORMATION REGARDING PLANS, IF ANY, OF PETROLEUM PRODUCERS TO BUY INTO EXISTING
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REFINERIES. SUMERFORD ALSO-MENTIONED POSSIBILITY THAT

LIBERIAN REFINERY MIGHT BE GREATLY EXPANDED AND TURNED INTO LARGE EXPORT REFINERY SUPPLYING PRODUCT TO US AND OTHER MARKETS.

2. SUMERFORD OPTIMISM RE CURRENT MANAGEMENT OF REFINERY AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH VIEWED HERE WITH SKEPTICISM

AND DEPARTMENT SUSPECTS SUNOCO'S REASONS FOR WANTING TO DUMP REFINERY SAME AS TOSE REPORTED REFTEL. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT OF REFINERY'S CURRENT PROFIT PICTURE AND CAPAULITY AND/OR WILLINGNESS LOCAL MARKET TO ASSUME SUNOCO SHARES. KISSINGER

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